

Spanish Club

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Abstract

The Spanish-speaking population in the United States is growing rapidly, and speaking Spanish has become increasingly important and beneficial. Students have a better opportunity to learn a new language at a young age, and introducing and teaching Spanish to students in elementary school is a great opportunity. I used my knowledge from both my Spanish major and Elementary Education major to plan and implement a Spanish After School Enrichment Club for students in the After-Care program at Forest Dale Elementary in Carmel, Indiana.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Nancy Melser for advising me through this project. She provided me with guidance and support throughout this process and during my student teaching experience, and I am thankful for her assistance in completing this project successfully.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Mary Podany for the idea of a Spanish Enrichment Club and Mrs. Valeska Simmons for allowing me to work with the Extended School Enrichment Program at Forest Dale.

Author's Statement

I developed a passion for the Spanish language, history, and culture in high school, and I pursued Spanish in college and decided to double major in elementary education and Spanish. My Spanish major led me to spend a semester studying abroad in Segovia, Spain, a phenomenal experience that expounded my love for Spanish. Learning the Spanish as an adolescent and an adult has been difficult, and I have always felt the importance of introducing and teaching Spanish to students at a younger age, such as during elementary school. Spanish is not part of the current elementary school curriculum, and in my elementary education classes at Ball State I did not have many opportunities to incorporate Spanish into my lesson plans and teaching. I love sharing my Spanish experiences with students, but I rarely had the opportunity to do so. The combination of a passion for Spanish and love for teaching guided me to my Senior Thesis: creating an after school Spanish enrichment club at the elementary school where I completed my student teaching.

Once I decided to complete my honors thesis during my student teaching, I asked my student teaching advisor, Dr. Melser, to also be my honors thesis advisor. She readily agreed, and she was a wonderful resource for me throughout the project. I began my student teaching experience in August of 2011 at Forest Dale Elementary in Carmel, Indiana. The spring before I began student teaching, Dr. Melser put me in contact with the schools vice principal, Mrs. Mary Podany. Mrs. Podany helped me work through the details of starting a Spanish Club, and she suggested working with the Extended School Enrichment Program that was already in place at Forest Dale. She also told me a few years prior Spanish had been a special at Forest Dale, but it had

recently been eliminated due to budget cuts. I was excited to hear the students at Forest Dale had already had some exposure and experience with Spanish, but was frustrated that it had to be cut due to the budget.

Once I had an idea for my thesis, I spent time over the summer beginning to plan exactly what the Spanish Club would include. I started by making lists of what I wanted to the students to gain from the club and what topics would be most interesting and helpful for them to learn. After I had a list of topics, I created ideas for activities and songs I could use to teach. When I began my student teaching in August, I had a general idea of for the content of the club and what our meetings would look like. After a few weeks of getting settled into my classroom at school, I contacted the Extended School Enrichment Program coordinator at Forest Dale, Valeska Simmons. She was extremely helpful and excited at the possibility of offering a Spanish Club to the students. Students who attend ESE after school at Forest Dale go to the gym after school where they participate in an organized program. Their afternoon begins every day with homework time, and later they are allowed to choose a “club” for the day. Every eight weeks there are new clubs for students to go to, including the gym, crafts, beads, and playing outside. My Spanish Club filled one of the club options and gave students the opportunity to choose Spanish club one afternoon each week. Valeska had an open club spot starting in October that met every Tuesday from 4:30-5:05, which worked wonderfully for me. Valeska also allowed me choose the grade levels for the club, and we decided it would be open to third through fifth grade students. The content I developed for the club meetings over the summer was geared toward upper elementary students, and I was also excited for the change of age and challenge of

older students from my second graders in my student teaching classroom. Once Valeska and I had all the logistical details worked out, I set to work planning the details for each club meeting.

First, I looked back at the original list of topics and ideas I had created over the summer and began to narrow and combine them. The club would meet six times, so I planned seven lessons of about thirty-five minutes each in case I needed an extra or needed to change the content based on the students needs. I knew the students would not be able to learn the entire Spanish language in six lessons, but I had high expectations that they would leave the club with knowledge and appreciation for Spanish language and culture. I wanted the students to be able to speak in phrases and hold brief conversations, so I planned to speak as much Spanish as possible myself and planned to teach phrases and sentences in addition to vocabulary words. In planning the first club, I decided it would be best to begin with the Spanish alphabet. I also wanted to immerse them into the language right away, so I planned to teach them greeting phrases we would then use throughout the rest of the club. After planning the content for the first lesson, I chose major topics to focus on for the remaining five: physical descriptions, family, months and days of the week, clothing, and weather. For each lesson topic I developed a fun and interactive way to introduce the content, and added a game or activity that allowed the students to practice what they had learned. I have learned in my education classes all students learn in different ways, and I wanted to meet the needs of all my students by providing a variety of activities for each lesson. As I planned the order of the lessons, I tried to vary the content from week to week by

separating lessons that had drawing activities, active games, or music and songs so that the lessons were not similar two weeks in a row.

Once I had all my lessons planned, I began gathering my materials. I created the majority of my materials for all the lessons before Spanish Club began so that I would be prepared and not have extra to prepare between each week. I chose to use PowerPoint to introduce new information because it allowed me to manipulate when each text box or picture would appear on the screen. I also searched for videos and songs on the Internet to enhance the lessons. I was able to use the teacher's workroom at Forest Dale to create my paper materials, and the school library was a wonderful resource for books. The last week of September all the Spanish Club lessons were planned and my materials were ready. I was excited to get started and meet my new students!

Research Paper: Learning a Foreign Language

In the 2010 United States Census, the estimated Hispanic population was 48.4 million, “making people of Hispanic origin the nation's largest ethnic or race minority” (Newsroom, 2010, p.1). In 2008, 35 million U.S. residents age five and older spoke Spanish at home (Newsroom, 2010). According to Martha G. Abbott, Director of Education for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, “It is critical that foreign language instruction be available to all students throughout their PK-12 academic experience” (Cognitive, 2007). Learning a foreign language has become an essential twenty-first century skill for students in the United States. As students prepare to live and work in a global society, they must realize that any career choice will require them to interact with others who are not native English speakers (Cognitive, 2007). Learning a foreign language and being bilingual have many benefits including language, literacy, social, and cognitive development, and research has shown that learning a foreign language at an early age enhances these benefits. In addition, there are many strategies and factors that determine the effectiveness of teaching a foreign language, and an instructor must consider these factors in order to be effective.

Learning a foreign language has many benefits. Foreign language has a positive effect on intellectual growth, and it also enhances students' mental, cognitive, social, and linguistic development. In addition, learning foreign language increases students' critical thinking skills, flexibility of mind, and creativity (Cognitive, 2007). Studies have shown students engaged in learning a foreign language score higher in verbal and math portions of standardized tests (Cognitive, 2007). One study conducted in Harwich, Massachusetts in 2007 showed that students involved in learning a foreign language

scored higher on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test in all sections (Cognitive, 2007). Another benefit of learning a foreign language is the improvement of the understanding of one's native language. As students develop skills in a foreign language, it enhances understanding of the native language and improves speech and writing. Finally, learning a foreign language opens doors to other cultures and helps students better understand and appreciate people from other countries.

Learning a foreign language is an essential skill to develop at any age; however, research shows there are many benefits to learning a foreign language early in life. Before age six, children are able to learn more than one language without becoming confused (Halgunseth, 2012). In addition, children who have not reached puberty still have the ability to develop near native-like pronunciation and intonation (Cognitive, 2007). Beginning to learn a language at a young age sets the stage for the child to develop proficiency in one or more languages. Likewise, overall academic achievement is increased through longer sequences of foreign language instruction. A study conducted with young children in Canada showed bilingual children developed the concept of object permanence sooner than monolingual children; they learned that an object remains the same and performs the same function despite being called by a different name in another language (Cognitive, 2007). Learning a foreign language as a child increases critical thinking skills, creativity, and flexibility of mind in children, further aiding their academic success in all subject areas (Cognitive, 2007). The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages lists many benefits of learning a second language at an early age, including having a positive effect on intellectual growth, enriching the child's mental development, developing greater sensitivity to language a

better ear for listening, and improving understanding of native language (Benefits). Another benefit of beginning foreign language instruction at an early age is the majority of elementary age students' natural curiosity to learn a new language. This curiosity, evident in a study conducted in Slovenia (Brumen, 2011), provides intrinsic motivation for students to learn. In the same manner, young children are often more open and accepting of people from other cultures or who speak languages different from their own, and thus more curious to learn these languages (Cognitive, 2007). One final benefit of learning a foreign language at an early age is the opportunity for gifted and talented students to be challenged both intellectually and developmentally.

An effective foreign language teacher uses a balanced approach that considers several variables, including students' age, ability, developmental levels, motivation, the difference between the native and foreign languages, and the time available (Alberta, 2008). Each of these factors can influence the success of learning a foreign language, and they must be considered in planning a program or lessons. In addition to these factors, an instructor must also consider effective teaching strategies and tools for teaching a foreign language, such as the learning environment, materials, thematic units, cooperative learning, games, and graphic organizers. The Alberta Education Program for teaching Spanish to young children explains essential strategies to effectively teach students, including step-by-step instruction; a variety of instructional methods; the use of modeling, guided practice, and independent practice; and making meaningful connections between content and real-life situations (Alberta, 2008).

The first factor a teacher must focus on is creating a positive learning environment. The Network Innovative Project in Slovenia studied preschool children

learning a foreign language, and during the study the researchers found the students showed need of “a pleasant, safe, and supportive atmosphere” (Brumen, 2011, p.1). The learning environment should also encourage risk-taking and aid students in making connections to prior knowledge and real-life experiences (Alberta, 2008). In addition to creating a positive learning environment, a teacher must also choose materials that are flexible, able to accommodate diverse learners, and appeal to student interests. The *Alberta Program Guide to Implementation* suggests, “students should work with all kinds of authentic audio, video, print and multimedia resources” (Alberta, 2008, p.19). The use of these tools allows students to engage in and listen to the language through various mediums.

One effective instructional strategy discussed in the *Alberta Program Guide to Implementation* is the development of thematic units. In a thematic unit, the teacher develops a central idea as the basis for an entire unit or a lesson plan, and all coordinating activities are centered on the idea or theme. The development of one big idea provides a framework for students to apply the concepts and skills they are learning. Furthermore, a thematic unit helps to create a collaborative environment as all children are working toward understanding the same concept or theme. Thematic units are especially successful teaching methods for classes with children of various ages and levels because they can reach a wide range of abilities, and “all students are able to build knowledge, skills, and attitudes and to experience success at their own level” (Alberta, 2008). In addition to thematic units, cooperative learning is an extremely effective teaching strategy. During cooperative learning, students work in small groups to complete tasks, and each group member is assigned a specific job. The use of

cooperative learning groups promotes cooperation and team building and helps students develop social skills and responsibility. Additionally, students are actively working to learn the language for themselves while the teacher acts as a facilitator of learning.

Another effective teaching tool is the use of games. During a study conducted in kindergarten classrooms in Slovenia, research showed that children “expressed a need for playful activities,” and enjoyed activities in which they were actively engaged, such as singing, talking, playing, and moving (Brumen, 2011). The Alberta program also suggests using games during Spanish instruction as an effective way to develop vocabulary and reinforce concepts taught in a lesson. The teacher must develop and implement a variety of games that involve the whole class, small groups, and partners. In addition, the games must be interactive, cooperative and fun in order to successfully engage all students (Alberta, 2008). Graphic organizers are another useful tool in teaching a foreign language. There are many different types of graphic organizers, such as K-W-L charts, t-charts, pie graphs, and Venn diagrams. Graphic organizers enhance student understanding of a concept, and the students are able to focus more on their own language development. Graphic organizers also help to link the language with the content being taught and allow students to visualize the concepts they are learning (Alberta, 2008).

Speaking a foreign language, specifically Spanish, is becoming a highly marketable skill for persons living in the United States. The benefits of learning a foreign language at any age are highly profitable; however, research suggests beginning the process at an early age has numerous advantages. Teachers and administrators of

foreign languages must consider many factors in planning programs and lessons, and they must use effective teaching strategies and tools in order for students to be successful.

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Lesson Plans: Week 1

Date: Tuesday, October 4, 2011

Topics: Alphabet & Greetings

Objectives:

- **Recite** the Spanish alphabet with correct pronunciation.
- **Role-play** meeting another student and greeting them in Spanish.

Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation
- Internet access/computer
- *Say Hola to Spanish* by Susan Middleton Elya (first half only)

Procedure:

- **Welcome**
 - Introduce myself
 - Students say names and grade level
- **Read Aloud**
 - *Say Hola to Spanish* (first half only)
- **Introduce Alphabet Song**
 - Show video once:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MJbHmgaeDM&feature=related>
 - Practice letters together using alphabet strip above board
 - Show video 1-2 more times, student sing along
- **Greetings**
 - Introduce phrases with power point, students repeat
 - Introduce greeting conversation, students repeat
 - I model with volunteer
 - Students for pairs and practice using the PowerPoint slide
 - Switch partners and practice again
 - Student turn away from the PowerPoint slide and practice without looking
- **Wrap-Up**
 - Teach goodbye phrases
 - Students repeat and practice

El Alfabeto

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MjbtmgaeDM&feature=related>

A B C D E F G H
I J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

Hola

Hi/Hello

Buenos Días

Good morning

Buenas tardes

Good afternoon

¿Como te llamas?

What is your name?

Me llamo...

My name is...

El gusto es mío

*The pleasure is mine
(nice to meet you)*

Encantado

*Delighted
(nice to meet you)*

¿Cómo estás?

How are you?

Estoy muy bien.

I am great.

Estoy bien.

I am good.

Estoy así así.

I am fine/okay.

Estoy bien.
I am good.

- Find a partner.
- Practice

Greeting Practice

Hola! Cómo te llamas?

Me llamo _____. ¿Y tú?

Me llamo _____.

Encantado.

El gusto es mío. ¿Cómo estas?

Estoy muy bien. ¿Y tú?

Estoy bien, gracias.

Lesson Plans: Week 2

Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2011

Topic: Physical Descriptions

Objectives:

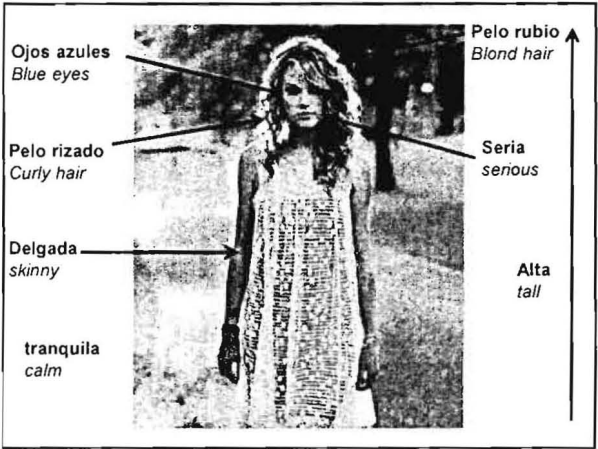
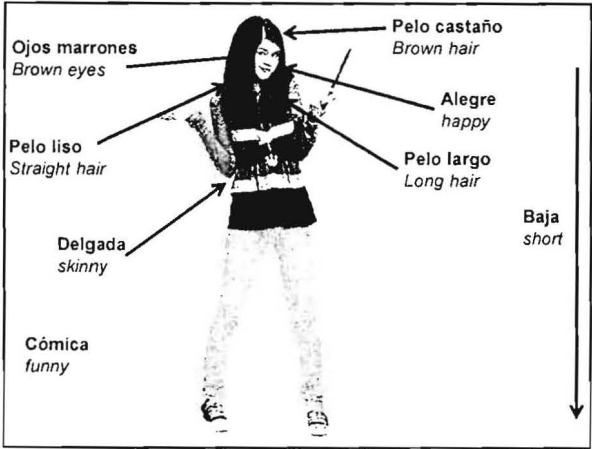
- **Describe** pictures of people using Spanish adjectives and describing words.
- **Illustrate** a self-portrait and **apply** the Spanish describing words to themselves.

Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation
- *Say Hola to Spanish* by Susan Middleton Elya
- Computer paper
- Colored pencils

Proceudre:

- **Welcome**
 - Students introduce themselves with "Hola, Me llamo ____"
- **Read Aloud**
 - *Say Hola to Spanish* (second half)
- **New Information: Introduce Physical Descriptions**
 - Show picture of Selena Gomez
 - What are some words you would use to describe her? (students respond)
 - Descriptions appear one at a time
 - Model, students repeat twice and point
 - Continue through all descriptions
 - Point to the area on Selena, students say Spanish describing word
 - Repeat process for Taylor Swift picture
- **Practice: Self Portraits**
 - Show students word bank
 - Students draw portraits of themselves on computer paper with colored pencils
 - Label portraits with five or more describing words (using the word bank)
 - Label with both Spanish and English phrases
- **Wrap-Up**
 - Review goodbye phrases
 - Students repeat and practice



Ojos marrones Brown eyes	Ojos azules Blue eyes	Pelo largo Long hair	
Pelo liso Straight hair	Pelo rizado Curly hair	Pelo castaño Brown hair	Pelo rubio Blond hair
Alegre happy	Seria serious	Cómica funny	tranquila calm
Baja short	Alta tall	Delgada skinny	

Lesson Plans: Week 3

Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2011

Topic: Months/Days of the Week

Objectives:

- **Identify** the written Spanish month when the Spanish month is read orally.
- **Select** the correct written month or day of the week in Spanish upon hearing the English day or month.

Materials:

- *Skippy jon Jones* by Judy Schachner
- PowerPoint presentation
- Large paper strips with months and days of the week
- Fly swatters

Procedure:

- **Welcome**
 - Practice whole-class greeting: "¿Hola, cómo estás? etc."
 - Students introduce themselves with "Hola, Me llamo ____"
- **Read Aloud**
 - *Skippy jon Jones*
- **New Information: Introduce Months & Days of the Week**
 - Go through PowerPoint presentation of months
 - I say, students repeat twice
 - Students make a motion for each month to associate
 - Repeat month twice again with motion
 - Go through months in order and out of order, making motions and saying the words
- **Practice: Swat Game**
 - Spread out strips with months written on the floor
 - Students stand around in a circle, each holding a fly swatter
 - I say the month in Spanish, students must swat the corresponding strip with that month written
 - Play several rounds
 - I say the month in English, students must swat the corresponding strip with that month
 - Repeat several times
- **New Information: Introduce Days of the Week**
 - Introduce days of the week using PowerPoint slide
 - I say, students repeat twice
 - Sing days of the week song using Spanish words

- Practice words and song several times
- **Practice: Swat Game**
 - Students play swat game again with days of the week strips
 - After practicing several rounds, mix the months and days of the week together and continue playing
- **Wrap-Up**
 - Practice saying today's date including the month and year
 - Students repeat and practice

Los meses *months*

enero 	abril 	julio 	octubre 
febrero 	mayo 	agosto 	noviembre 
marzo 	junio 	septiembre 	diciembre 

Los días de semana

Martes <i>Tuesday</i>	Miércoles <i>Wed.</i>	Jueves <i>Thursday</i>	Viernes <i>Friday</i>
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Lesson Plans: Week 4

Date: Tuesday, October 25, 2011

Topic: Family

Objectives:

- **Identify** pictures of family members using the Spanish vocabulary.
- **Diagram** a family tree with the correct Spanish labels for each family member.

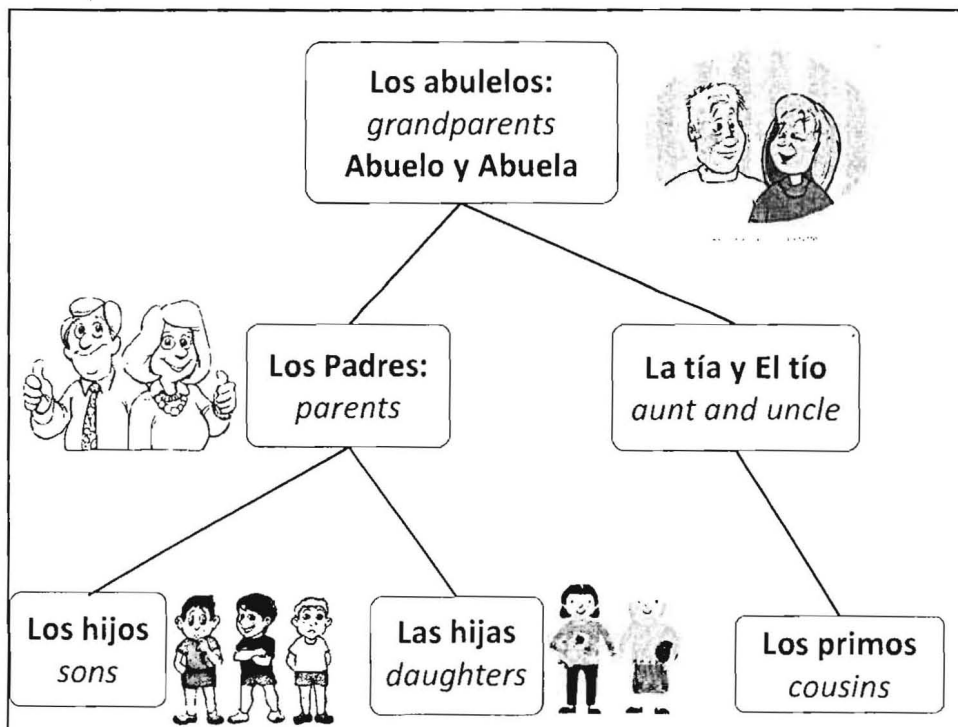
Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation
- Computer paper
- Colored pencils

Procedure:

- **Welcome**
 - Practice whole-class greeting: “¿Hola, cómo estás? etc.”
- **New Information: Introduce Family**
 - Show the picture of my family and describe who they are in several sentences in Spanish
 - Point to one of my family members and introduce them
 - Students guess who the family member is and the Spanish word for them (i.e. padre = dad)
 - I say Spanish word, students repeat twice, I say entire sentence
 - Repeat for each family member in the picture
 - Introduce the family tree on the next slide
 - Students guess who the pictures represent
 - I say Spanish word/phrase, students repeat twice
 - I ask students questions with Spanish vocabulary: “Who has an hermana? Who has an hermano?” etc.
 - I point to pictures of family members in random order, students repeat the Spanish word
- **Practice: Family Pictures/Trees**
 - Students draw pictures of their extended families
 - Students label the people in their pictures in both Spanish and English
 - If students have extra time, they label the physical characteristics of the family members (review of week 2)
- **Wrap-Up**
 - Students introduce their families to each other using their pictures and the Spanish vocabulary

Mi Familia



Lesson Plans: Week 5

Date: Tuesday, November 1, 2011

Topic: Clothing

Objectives:

- **Show** the appropriate article of clothing when the English clothing is stated.
- **Dramatize** the lyrics of "Billy la Bufanda" to demonstrate the meaning of the words.

Materials:

- Computer/Internet Access
- Scarves

Procedure:

- **Welcome**
 - Practice whole-class greeting: "¿Hola, cómo estás? etc."
- **New Information: Introduce Clothing**
 - Describe the clothes I am wearing in Spanish
 - Teach students basic clothing vocabulary by pointing to clothing
 - I say, students repeat twice
 - I point to clothing students are wearing and they say the vocabulary word in Spanish
- **Practice: Billy La Bufanda**
 - Show students the video of Billy La Bufanda (Billy the Scarf) once <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxl5JGFHRoU>
 - Show the video again, stopping periodically to have students explain what is happening in the video
 - Create a word bank of vocabulary on the board as a reference
 - Teach students the main chorus of the song
 - Each student receives a scarf to wear/use as a prop
 - Students create motions for the chorus
 - Play song again; students sing along and do motions during the chorus
- **Wrap-Up**
 - Before leaving, students name two articles of clothing they are wearing (in Spanish)

Lesson Plans: Week 6

Date: Tuesday, November 22, 2011

Topic: Weather

Objectives:

- **Dramatize** weather phrases with corresponding motions.
- **Tell** the English meaning of a weather phrase written in Spanish.

Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation
- Weather phrase strips
- Computer/Internet access

Procedures:

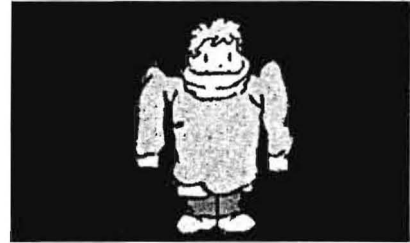
- **Welcome**
 - Practice whole-class greeting: "¿Hola, cómo estás? etc."
- **New Information: Introduce Weather**
 - Go through each slide of the PowerPoint to introduce the weather phrase
 - Show the picture, students say what type of weather it shows
 - Introduce the Spanish vocabulary: I say, students repeat twice
 - Students create motion for weather phrase
 - Practice saying phrase and doing motion together
 - Repeat for each weather phrase
 - Randomly review other phrases after every two new phrases
- **Practice: Spanish Weather Rap**
 - Show the students the "Spanish Weather Rap" video
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aszXrnocJY0>
 - Students sing along with the video and do the motions they've created
 - Watch the video again, singing along and doing the motions
- **Practice: Flash Cards Game**
 - Students form pairs to play a flashcard game
 - Strips of all the weather phrases (in Spanish) are spread out on the floor face down
 - One student chooses a strip and turns it over. He must read the phrase, do the correct motion, and say what the phrase means in English
 - If he gets the motion and phrase correct, he keeps the card
 - If he cannot remember the motion, he puts the card back down on the floor
 - The other student takes a turn doing the same process
 - Students take turns pulling cards until all the cards are gone
 - The student with the most cards at the end wins

- If students have extra time, place all the cards face down and play again
- **Wrap-Up**
 - Before leaving, students state what the weather is today, what it was yesterday, and what they predict it will be tomorrow

Hace calor
it's hot



Hace fresco
it's cool



Hace sol
it's sunny



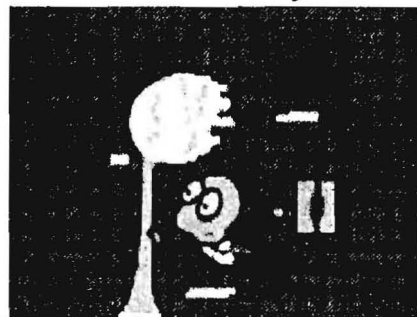
Hace frío
it's freezing



Está nublado
it's cloudy



Hace viento
it's windy



Está nevando
it's snowing



Está lloviendo
it's raining



Hay tormenta
it's storming



Hay graniza
it's hailing



El Tiempo
the weather

Mal tiempo
bad weather

Buen tiempo
good weather

Hace sol
It's sunny

Está lloviendo
It's raining

Hace frío
It's freezing

Hace calor
It's hot

Está nevando
It's snowing

Está nublado
It's cloudy

Hay graniza
It's hailing

Hace fresco
It's cool

Hace viento
It's windy

Hay tormenta
It's storming

Spanish Club 1: October 4, 2011

Reflection

The first day of Spanish Club was Tuesday, October 4. I was nervous but also excited to meet new students and share one of my greatest passions! I met the students in the cafeteria and led them down to my classroom. I was surprised to have a group of all girls, mostly third and fourth graders and one fifth grader. Once we reached the classroom, I had the students sit on the rug and I introduced myself and the club to them completely in Spanish. The students sat and stared at me for a few moments until I finally said, "This is Spanish Club, right? Didn't you understand what I said?" They looked nervously at each other for a few seconds until I laughed and told them I didn't expect them to understand me at all, but I wanted them to hear authentic spoken Spanish. They seemed very relieved when I repeated my introduction in English. I introduced myself, set my expectations for the club, and shared what we would be learning that day and throughout the rest of Spanish Club. I then had the students to introduce themselves by saying their names and grade level. After our introductions, I began the lesson with an interactive read aloud of a book called *Say Hola to Spanish* by Susan Middleton Elya. The book has rich Spanish vocabulary embedded in a way that students can infer the meanings of the Spanish words through looking at the pictures and thinking about the context of the sentences. As I read the book aloud, I paused every few pages and asked the students the meaning of a word, had them repeat a word or phrase, or asked them a question. The read aloud gave me an idea of the students' previous knowledge of Spanish and their comfort levels in volunteering answers or ideas. After the read aloud, I introduced the students to the Spanish

alphabet through an alphabet song video on YouTube. I was excited to see the students enjoyed the video and music, and they were able to sing along by the end.

I have learned from my own experiences learning Spanish repetition is essential in learning a language. As I introduced the greetings phrases from the PowerPoint, I had the students repeat the phrases several times and listen to my pronunciation. I enjoyed teaching this part of the lesson, and I spoke as much Spanish as possible to immerse the students. The students were nervous when I asked them to get with a partner and practice the phrases on their own, but I encouraged them it was just practice and fun. Once they went through the conversation a few times, they seemed much more comfortable and enjoyed talking in Spanish with each other. The time went by very quickly, but I was able to pace out the lesson so that the students had time to practice the greeting with two different partners. At the end of the lesson, I taught the students “goodbye” and “see you next week” in Spanish. Overall I was excited at the success of the first meeting! The lesson flowed smoothly, and the students seemed excited and interested in everything we were doing. I loved being able to teach Spanish and meet older students from my school.

Spanish Club 2: October 11, 2011

Reflection

I was surprised the second week of the Spanish club to see some new faces from the first week, and I had not realized the students would not be the exact same group each week. The Extended School Enrichment program at Forest Dale is offered every day, but parents can choose what days their children attend. Not all the students from the previous week were at ESE again this Tuesday, and there were a few new students that had not been there the week before. I had planned to review the previous week's lesson first, so I had students who had been there share what they learned. I also put the PowerPoint from the previous week on the board so the new students could read the phrase "Me llamo ____" as they introduced themselves. The students were nervous to speak in Spanish to each other, but it was encouraging to hear them talking in complete sentences!

I used pictures of Selena Gomez and Taylor Swift to teach about physical descriptions, and the students were excited and motivated when they saw a few of their favorite stars. They connected to the content and were more engaged in the learning. The students also enjoyed drawing pictures of themselves. It was interesting to watch the students work; some spent a lot of time drawing while others immediately began labeling themselves. I had several students ask about words that I had not included in the word bank, and I was encouraged at their enthusiasm to learn more! Although I was surprised with the group of students and how it changed, the club went well and the students were able to take home their drawings to help them remember the Spanish vocabulary.

Spanish Club 3: October 18, 2011

Reflection

I began this weeks lesson with one of my favorite books, *Skippy jon Jones*. The students responded well to the book, and I am sure my enthusiasm for Skippy jon Jones encouraged their interest. As I went through teaching the students the months of the year, they enjoyed doing the motions for the months. I realized as I got about halfway through the students were getting restless, so I stopped and let them take a short break. I had all the students stand up, find a partner, and practice introducing themselves. I challenged the students to use as much Spanish as they could remember from the greeting conversations, and I was glad to see some of the students able to remember without needing guidance!

We finished learning the months of the year and got ready to play swat. The students were excited when I showed them the fly swatters, and I knew they would enjoy the action of the game. I had them stand up around the words so they were more active and moving. They enjoyed racing each other to find the correct month, and we all repeated the month twice after each round. After we played several rounds, I introduced the days of the week. The students repeated the words several times, an then I had them stand in a line and say the days of the week in order going down the line. Once they seemed comfortable with the new words, we played the swat game again with just the days of the week cards. After playing several rounds, I challenged them by combining the months and the days of the week together. The students did very well learning the months and days, and they loved playing swat! It was a great game to keep all the students active, and it easily adapted to the amount of time we had.

Spanish Club 4: October 25, 2011

Reflection

I enjoyed teaching this lesson on family, and it was a great opportunity to connect what we were learning to real life. I introduced the vocabulary for family by sharing my own family with the students. They enjoyed seeing a picture of my family, and they were interested in what they were learning because they liked hearing about my life. As I introduced each member of my family, I spoke in complete sentences in Spanish. I was excited to see the students weren't nearly as overwhelmed as the first week with my Spanish speaking, and they were able to pull out vocabulary from what I was saying. The students built confidence listening to me talk about my own family, and when I transitioned to the family tree, they were able to decipher what I was saying. I was also impressed by their confidence in answering questions I asked in Spanish about their families, such as "Who has an hermana?"

The students transitioned easily from looking at the picture of my family and the family tree to drawing and labeling their own family pictures. Several students finished pictures of their immediate families, and I encouraged them to add more family members to their drawings and label them. They were able to connect what they learned to their own lives, and the information stuck with them. The final activity allowed the students to take ownership of their new Spanish vocabulary and take their pictures home to share with their families.

Spanish Club 5: November 1, 2011

Reflection

I was so excited to introduce Billy la Bufanda to my students! I learned about him and watched his videos in high school, and after my students' previous responses to videos, I thought they would love him. I began the lesson by immersing students in Spanish speaking again by describing my clothes in complete sentences. The students did a wonderful job following along and understanding the new vocabulary. They loved being examples for me, and they responded well when I had students stand up to show different articles of clothing.

Before they watched the video of *Billy la Bufanda*, I showed them a picture of Billy and had them make educated guesses at what bufanda means. I encouraged them to watch and listen carefully throughout the video and try to find at least one word they learned the meaning of to share with the class. First I let them watch the video all the way through so they could see it in completion. Several students were able to share words after watching it once, and we created a large word bank on the board. I showed the video again, this time stopping at the end of each segment. I was impressed with all the words the students picked up, and we talked about what where Billy was going and what was happening in the story. After we had gone through the entire video, I gave the students scarves and let them dance and sing along as we watched the video again. The students loved singing along, and they were able to follow the words on the screen and sing in Spanish! It was a great Spanish club, and we had a lot of fun with Billy la Bufanda.

Spanish Club 6: November 22, 2011

Reflection

For our last Spanish club we began by reviewing what we learned in our very first meeting. The students introduced themselves to each other and practiced greeting one another in Spanish. They did a great job, and I was proud of all they learned. Our focus for the last club was on weather, and I challenged the students with a large amount of weather phrases to learn. As I introduced each weather phrase, I had the students to create motions, which allowed them to be actively engaged in the learning process. The lesson included lots of repetition; after each new phrase we would practice a few of the previous phrases and motions without seeing them on the PowerPoint. The students learned the phrases fairly quickly, and we did everything chorally so that if one student wasn't sure he could hear his classmates say the phrase without being called out.

The students responded positively to music, and I was glad to incorporate a weather rap in the last club. The rap goes to the song "Boom Boom Pow" by the Black Eyed Peas, and the students were familiar with the tune. We watched the video all the way through once, and the second time I had the students stand up and move around as they sang along and did the motions. I had mostly boys at the club that day, and they enjoyed the rap. Our final activity was a flashcard game where students raced to say the Spanish or English weather phrase after reading a phrase on a card. The game was great because all the students were involved at once, but they were only working against one person. At the end of the club we said our Spanish goodbye on last time. I was sad to say goodbye to my Spanish students, but I was extremely proud of all they accomplished and learned through the club!

What I Learned and Gained

Completing my thesis was a great learning experience for me, and I gained a tremendous amount of knowledge about myself, elementary children, and teaching Spanish. Through working with the students in Spanish Club each week I learned that most elementary students are fully capable of learning a new language. My students were able to learn the information, apply it through conversation and activities, and remember the information throughout the following weeks. I also learned that students need to be engaged and active while they are learning, especially in an after school environment. Student who came to Spanish Club had already been at school all day, and in order to keep their attention I needed to engage them in the lesson. In addition, I observed through teaching my lessons content that directly connects with students is more meaningful to them, and students remember the information better after applying it to their own lives. The students loved the activities such as making a self-portrait and drawing a family tree when they were able to use Spanish language to describe themselves and their families.

I attempted to speak Spanish as much as possible during each Spanish Club and immerse the students into the language. I observed through the children's responses that immersion into a language is essential to learning that language; students do not learn to speak a language by only learning one word vocabulary and simple sentences. Although the students did not understand every word I said, they were able to hear how sentences are formed, listen to a proper Spanish accent, and recognize words they knew within my speaking.

I loved spending with and getting to know other students from Forest Dale, and working with upper elementary students was a nice change from the second graders in my student teaching classroom. The students had a large potential to comprehend and learn the Spanish language, and they were excited to learn it! I was extremely proud of my students and all they had learned by the end of the club, and overall the club was a fantastic experience!

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